



COMMENT SUMMARY REPORT

CAC Meeting September 11, 2017
DRPT Passenger Rail Tier II EIS

Source	Comment	Topics
14714 8/13 Web Comment Form	Not only would the noise produced by a high speed rail interrupt nearby residents' daily lives but also the construction of the Eastern Bypass would necessitate the destruction of both Washington-Lacy State Park and nearby wetlands and forest areas. The resultant decline in property values for these new homeowners would lead to a regression in tax revenues for Hanover County, which would be severely detrimental for the funding of roads, schools, and other public services on which these residents and their families rely; furthermore, vibrations produced by passenger and freight trains travelling at up to 90 mph would likely cause foundation damage to hundreds of new homes on Woodside Lane, leading to further financial detriment for families trying to start a life in Hanover.	Alignments – Ashland, Parks/Recreation, Wetlands, Real Estate
14720 8/14 Web Comment Form	I am concerned about your response as noted below from the summary of the July 25, 2017 CAC Meeting Summary: "Q: Can the CAC eliminate options? A: Yes, it would be helpful for the CAC to come to consensus about which alternatives you would like to continue to consider and which options you no longer are considering. However, we haven't issued the draft EIS yet, so a full range of options will be listed in the draft EIS. A realistic goal would be to identify the best option in each category for the Eastern Bypass, Western Bypass, Through Town, and Below-Grade options." How can the CAC perform the task requested by DRPT, "...It would be helpful for the CAC to come to consensus about which alternatives you would like to continue to consider...", when in the very next sentence you admit the "full range of options" will be listed in the yet-to-beissued draft EIS. Without the benefit of reading the draft EIS, are you not setting up the CAC for failure? How can they "come to consensus" when they do not know the "full range of options"?	Alignments – Ashland, Public Involvement
14721 8/15 Web Comment Form	I have lived most of my adult life in Ashland and Hanover County, and I love my community. A third rail would destroy the integrity of our historic, quaint and wonderful town. I know a bypass is the only reasonable and responsible choice to address future transportation needs but also to preserve a future for Ashland.	Alignments – Ashland



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14722 8/15 Web Comment Form	The only fair option is a bypass. A historic town like Ashland will be crippled by a third rail, scenically, financially and practically. You must choose a bypass!	Alignments – Ashland
14734 8/20 Web Comment Form	I found the Ashland, Va. rail cam. That started my interest in Amtraks and to a lesser amount the freights coming through. Fascinating to see people, automobiles, trains, and businesses could all be together without fences, traffic signals.	Alignments – Ashland, Mobility
14735 8/21 Email	<p>Dear Sirs, A FIFTY MILLION \$ STUDY! It should now be clear to everyone what's going on. The publishers of the \$50,000,000 DEIS have failed to include a number of important, instinctive, obvious things:</p> <p>1.A big shortcut S. of Fredericksburg: An abbreviation - tunnel(s) not shown - with 25 mi. of new tracks. It's pretty rural and there's a lot of vertical play in the topography for avoiding obstacles. Not much else in terms of abbreviation presents itself Richmond-to-DC. An obvious high speed solution is to build single-bore 2-track tunnels, which allow high speed - with a center track for double-stack at night. Don't believe these Ivy League flunkies if they tell you otherwise. I would be happy to work out a feasible grade and tunnel scheme upon request.</p> <p>2. Why, if building for high-speed rail, would you want to add two lengthy bypasses at important junctures Ashland and Fredericksburg? To benefit freight carriers with free bypass trackage? To incur extra unnecessary construction and operating costs? To build an overpriced and out-of-the-way station? The same thing just happened in Illinois. The first section of their new high-speed line is 18.4 miles long and has TWENTY GRADE CROSSINGS. - not a single crossing eliminated - out in the middle of nowhere. They built a 2.5-mi. siding and a \$3.5-million station in the wrong place to</p>	Alignments – Ashland, Alignments – Fredericksburg, Stations, Alternatives



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	<p>upstage the unique historical listed structure two blocks away. Without a grading scheme the platforms will be too high when they finally get it grade-separated. This line-upgrade was not an upgrade; it's a downgrade. Ashland is right to complain. I'm sure the alternatives they've been offered are all worse than flawed. There is NO MENTION of any grade separation project through Ashland in the DEIS that I can find. This is inexplicable in a \$50,000,000 study. They should be sued. The street down which the double-track line runs is 75' wide all the way. Cut-and-cover operations are largely automated now, providing a less expensive alternative to the new-alignment circuitous BYPASS. There is no debilitating exigency of grade affecting this; it is an intentional omission, designed to backwardize both rail and living standards in the affected areas. There are many creature comforts attending grade separation to incentivize the proper configuration.</p>	
<p>14739 8/23 Agency Letter/Email</p>	<p>This is the response to the bored tunnel versus deep bore tunnel:</p> <p>How does this shorter tunnel affect the number and placement of ventilation facilities? That is, can some of the ventilation structures be eliminated and thus not have one mid-downtown? DRPT's conceptual engineering indicates that the soft earth tunnel would not be substantially shorter than the deep bore tunnel, and the ventilation requirement would also not differ.</p> <p>Comment: The drawings distributed to the committee members during the last meeting appear to show the bore tunnel is a mile shorter (MP CFP 13.8 – 16.3, which includes the cut and cover portion of the tunnel) than the deep bore (MP CFP 12.6 – 16.3, which includes the cut and cover portion of the tunnel) – or about a third shorter. This is consistent with what I heard when we met when it was stated the deep bore tunnel needed to start further south due to Stony Run and the need to avoid it. Please help me understand what I am looking at wrong.</p> <p>Here is the response to the grade separation question.</p>	<p>Agency Coordination, Alignments – Ashland, Alternatives</p>



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	<p>Does the option include grade separations at say Ashcake Road and Vaughan Road? The tunnel option would divert sufficient train traffic to the tunnel such that it would no longer be necessary to grade separate either Ashcake Road or Vaughan Road. Note that the Town of Ashland is pursuing a Vaughn Road grade separation. This project is listed in the Richmond Regional Transportation Planning Organization's Constrained Long Range Plan in the FY22-27 timeband.</p> <p>Comment: The grade separation question was related to the 3-2-3 option rather than a tunnel option. Thank you for the information about the Vaughan Road grade separation project being in the TPO's long range plan.</p>	
<p>14537 7/12 Comment - Letter</p>	<p>Ms. Stock:I am writing in support of the currently delineated alternatives regarding the DRPT's high-speed rail project .I live near the current location of the Buckingham Branch line in Hanover Virginia just south of Hanover Courthouse. The use of the Buckingham Branch line was rightly rejected early on in the DC2RVA process; this route was studied and rejected because of the requirements for multiple grade crossings acquisition of land outside the right of way and engineering issues related to the curvature of the existing line in addition the environmental issues reported in the Mechanicsville Local Routing Options Narrowed. The Department clearly made the correct decision to reject this possible alternative. Please do not resurrect this bad option for high-speed rail through Hanover County. Those of us who live close to this line feel just as strongly about the potential impacts to our homes as those whose views are shouted more loudly but which are no more valid than our own. Michele Anne Gillette7479 Cady's Mill Road Hanover VA 23069</p>	<p>Alignments-Ashland</p>



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14538 7/19 Web Comment	Please don't destroy our town. I say no to a thurd track.	Alignments-Ashland
14540 7/19 Web Comment	The eastern bypass option to reroute around Ashland is not acceptable to a significant number of families and communities that live close to the proposed route. We oppose the risk to our wetlands and Washington Lacy Park. We cannot imagine that high speed rail so close to so many homes and communities and the noise and vibration it would bring to a large population of people. We oppose the impact to route 54 and how the bypass would effectively cut off many small communities of people that have lived here for generations. We favor growth on the route 54 corridor between Ashland and Hanover. This proposed bypath route would be a significant deinsentive to that growth.	Alignments-Ashland, Wetlands, Biological Resources, Vibration, Noise
14541 7/19 Web Comment	A third rail through the town of Ashland should not be an option. It will effect the residences businesses and public buildings such as the Ashland Library.	Alignments-Ashland, Community Facilitates & Services
14546 7/19 Web Comment	Not at all in favor of a third rail in Ashland...I am a citizen of the town as well as a Randolph-Macon alumnus and now employee. There is absolutely no room for this project without completely changing the landscape of the town and R-MC campus.	Alignments- Ashland



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14723 8/15 Web Comment	It appears you have not even checked with Dominion Energy on use of their transmission easement for the eastern route. See below. Good evening Mr. Carpenter: I am not aware of any plans and there are a lot of preliminary variables that will need to be conformed to and approved before being permitted in our transmission easements. We do keep an eye out and I'll save your information if we learn more.	Utilities
14740 8/23 Web Comment	I want the new rial to bypass the city of Ashland. The placement of this new rail line with cause irreparable damage to the city and the unique quality of the city that makes it such a livable place. It will damage the cities economic vitality and drastically lower property values. I live close to the rail line and own a home in the city of Ashland and do not want to see my standard of living nor do I want to see my property value diminished.	Alignments- Ashland, Real Estate, Economics
14744 8/23 Email	HHHunt is a privately held company which originated in Blacksburg VA and now operates in four states(Maryland Virginia Notth Carolina and South Carolina) and across four disciplines-Apartment Living Senior Living homebuilding (HHHunt Homes) and community development (HHHunt Communities). HHHunt Communities has developed award winning communities throughout the Richmond MSA including Wyndhamand Twin Hickory in Hemico Charter Colony in Chesterfield and Rutland and Providence in Hanover. At HHHunt we believe that it's HOW YOU LIVE that matters and with that philosophy in mind this letter is to document HHHunt's objection to all proposed routes of the DC2RVA high rail project with the exception of the underground route (the Underground Route").Concerns regarding the routes other than the Underground Route stem from the impact their locations would have on greater Ashland area and the many significant cultural resources in vicinity to the routes. The Underground Option is preferred as it is the one option that best mitigates these impacts. Thank you for your thoughtful consideration and prompt attention to this matter.	Alignments- Ashland Cultural Resources
14745 8/24	I am considering purchasing property located at 14107 Independence Rd. Ashland VA23005 and need to know if it will be impacted by the high speed rail or is in the path of this railway. Please advise. I tried the interactive map but wasn't sure of the results. If you could clarify this information via email it would be appreciated. Thank you.	Information Request



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Web Comment Form		
14748 8/28 Web Comment	I feel that no one took into consideration of western Hanover outside of the town of Ashland. It looks like the town of Ashland wants its cake & eat it too! The town residents have given the DRPT the impression that as long as they get their way the Heck with Western Hanover residents. Well the dragon has been awakened!	Alignments- Ashland
14749 8/28 Web Comment Form	No Eastern Bypass of Ashland. It is unacceptable. The best option is a cut and cover through Ashland. While the construction period will be difficult the long term advantage to the town is just too great to overlook. The cut and cover would facilitate the removal of the crossings that delay people are risky to cross and threaten emergency response times. The extra space created by the cover could be used as green space... walking/biking paths sidewalk cafes farmers markets etc. The improvement to the town would be significant and would lead to better sales revenue for the businesses more foot traffic in the down town and a funded improvement project to make the town more attractive and inviting.	Alignments- Ashland Construction Traffic/Safety Economics Bicycle and Pedestrian
14754 8/29 Web Comment Form	The proposed western by-pass to Ashland now has 3 options. It appears one of the options has reverted back to the original by-pass option (2016). Unlike the original maps (2016) the current map details are no longer legible. This is very unfortunate!	Alignments- Ashland Public Involvement



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<p>14755 8/29 Web Comment Form / Ashland CAC Comment</p>	<p>In looking at all the options in Hanover County I am very much opposed to any of the Western Bypass Option. To equate picking an option where families will lose their homes farmland and a place of worship impacted over inconvenient days of construction for Ashland home owners business or a small liberal arts college is ludicrous . The trench proposal enhances a small town which has built itself around being a train town.. The trains are what bring people into town. Look at the restaurant names Trackside and The Iron Horse for instance. I truly will tell you it was built for train travel and has lived via train pr. So if you must pick an option choose a option that keeps them The Train Town. The Western Bypass does not want this title. Also I take issue with your site having two more Western Bypass Options that are impossible to clearly get a picture of. Shame on you for trying to get a committee to pick and option from the three presented in The Western Bypass that are not adequately presented to the general public. I have been at the meetings and your visuals were poor at RMC as was the sound system. Put better maps of all options out there and pick a better site for your September 11 meeting. This is a total charade and farce. To hear are presentative say Ashland Town and Hanover County must have put in a lot of consideration in their proposing The Wedtern Bypass at its inception was way beyond acceptable . This came out of the mouth of a RMC representative on your committee. I fail to understand why trains can not travel over I 95 if you can build a roadway over it why not trains? Also to equate moving a park over destroying homes or farmland is out there too. The people who live in The Western Bypass have lived here for multiple generations land here is still owned and worked by the original owners descendants . Why check the names of the roads you have this option traveling over Cross Corner Road for instance if you were to pick up the book The Crosses of Hanover you would see that most of the folks around here are in that book the mill on Indepedence was owned originally by folks still here some of the houses you will destroy and farms you will dissect are owned by the people in that book. We are Hanover . We are very upset by how easily we were literally thrown under your trains by our local small town. Why would they do this quite easy most but not all do not know this history . We have always shopped and worshipped here. Yes we have been here a very long time. There are some in Ashland who know this a very few live on Center Street . Butthey are not the County</p>	<p>Alignments- Ashland</p>



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	Adminstrator or the Town Adminstrator who wrote you those proposals or letters endorsing The Western Bypass. As a tax paying citizen of Hanover lobject to how we have been treated in my area . I object to your charade of meetings and I object to your poor maps. You call yourself giving Hanover County a choice in this matter well folks I was not born yesterday and you certainly are not fooling me. When push comes to shove you are just dumping your big mess in a few citizens lap so you can waltz down the road acting like you did something that gave them a choice in this matter. We all know this is not how this is really coming down. Disappointed by the whole charade! Ruth S. Wright	
14756 8/30 Web Comment Form / Ashland CAC Comment	Hello! I have read with interest the wealth of material that was provided as part of the recent Ashland/Hanover CAC series of meetings including the detailed responses provided to all of the comments received and first wanted to thank DPRT and all involved for taking to heart the desire from the community to increase transparency to the extent possible in this process. In reviewing the slate of options for the Ashland area I had a question that I didn't see an answer to for one of the options that seems to be making the rounds in discussion after the8/28 meeting the Trench Option. How would station access be handled? Would the existing station be maintained would a station stop be eliminated or would the station be moved to the Ashcake area? Additionally has any thought/proposal been given to a 2 track trench with a 1 track surface level track for station access? As a frequent rail passenger from the Ashland station while I think the idea of a trench would be more palpable than many of the other options the thought of how that would handle boardings gives me thoughts of the less than ideal boarding environments in the Northeast like Philly or New York.	Alignments- Ashland Stations
14758 8/31 Web Comment Form	Do not support the Western Bypass Options. Support no build three trench below grade or Eastern Bypass as most appropriate.	Alignments- Ashland



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<p>14769 8/31 Web Comment Form</p>	<p>Underground seems to be the only real option but I would limit it to passenger only traffic otherwise it won't be high speed at all. Better yet start the tunnel north of Ashland and keep it mostly underground through Richmond (two tracks). You could go with Trani' sidea of using the Diamond area for the train station but add Richmond's first Metro ring (or two) so a wider geographic area would have easy access to it. I realize the argument against this is going to be that it's too expensive and I agree it is. But it's one of those things where you either do it right or you don't do it at all. The implementation of this (slightly) high(er) speed rail project is probably 10 years away (or more) depending on which option is chosen. By then autonomous cars will be everywhere. You can call an autonomous cab to your location with an app on your phone and ride anywhere you want for practically nothing (no human driver and an all electric car makes it inexpensive). Way better than the hassle of finding a way to get to the train station waiting for the train waiting for everyone to get on the train waiting for it to stop along the way possibly having to change trains along your journey and then ultimately finding another means of transportation once you get (hopefully) near to your destination .In the future autonomous cars could have their own lanes like the center conduit on i95 up in the NoVA area. With dedicated lanes there are no human drivers to worry about. Autonomous cars can drive much closer together since they can communicate with each other and know exactly what they are all doing or about to do. They'll actually 'flock 'together. Hey sort of like an impromptu train (dare I say the train of the future?). That increases the capacity of the existing roadways without having to add any lanes. Plus as more people use these autonomous-only lanes the manually operated car lanes will also benefit from reduced congestion (but not necessarily reduced traffic incidents).I suppose you could build your upgraded train infrastructure around the idea of working alongside autonomous cars (for instance the car drives itself up onto a high speed train).This could work but the the only benefit I could see would be if the train is capable of much greater speeds than the car. That is true of high speed rail in Europe and the hyperloop concept but not really true of the current or proposed rail plans on the east coast. We're at a crucial moment in the history of transportation. There may actually be a future where passenger trains still exist but without aggressive foward-looking strategies and technologies it is much more likely that they</p>	<p>Alternatives Rail Tech/Electrification Transit</p>



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	<p>simply fade away into history. Freight-only trains may continue to exist for a while but even that industry may die off considering the diminishing coal transportation needs and the ever increasing demand for faster shipping. To save passenger train travel the trains MUST go faster. A lot faster. Fast enough that a car couldn't safely compete. But to go faster you need long straight sections of rail with no at-grade crossings and lots of tunnels or elevated sections to bypass highly populated areas. It'll be very expensive but if you build it they will come. Or... you could just do nothing. Save the money earmarked for the high speed rail project and spend it on schools or something.</p>	
<p>14770 9/1 Web Comment Form</p>	<p>Hey guys! I was excited to hear about the new trench option proposed through Ashland! On the surface it appears to be a great option for supporting the project while destroying homes neighborhoods or businesses without adding excessive costs. Thanks for working through this to ensure the project is successful and Ashland's small town charm stays intact!</p>	<p>Alignments- Ashland</p>
<p>14782 9/5 Web Comment Form</p>	<p>Concerning the trench option I would like you to investigate the possibility of doing this project in phases. If that is not possible then can you cover the part of the trench that you are not working on so that the town is less disrupted? Also cover the trench at the end of each work day. It will positively not work to close down the town the business district and the college for 2-3 years. Would you do that in DC? In Reston? Of course not. We need an alternative to total close-down in order to even consider this option.</p>	<p>Alignments- Ashland Construction</p>
<p>14782 9/5 Web Comment Form</p>	<p>Concerning the trench option I would like you to investigate the possibility of doing this project in phases. If that is not possible then can you cover the part of the trench that you are not working on so that the town is less disrupted? Also cover the trench at the end of each work day. It will positively not work to close down the town the business district and the college for 2-3 years. Would you do that in DC? In Reston? Of course not. We need an alternative to total close-down in order to even consider this option.</p>	<p>Alignments- Ashland Construction</p>



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14782 9/5 Web Comment Form	Concerning the trench option I would like you to investigate the possibility of doing this project in phases. If that is not possible then can you cover the part of the trench that you are not working on so that the town is less disrupted? Also cover the trench at the end of each work day. It will positively not work to close down the town the business district and the college for 2-3 years. Would you do that in DC? In Reston? Of course not. We need an alternative to total close-down in order to even consider this option.	Alignments- Ashland Construction
14787 9/7 Web Comment Form	Don't do any bypasses. Either build a tunnel or do a 3-2-3. I don't want my town and my county ruined by train tracks that aren't needed in the first place. Perhaps IF train trips weren't so expensive you'd have an argument for this project but it's cheaper to go anywhere by car. Don't do the bypasses. Don't ruin people's lives and take away their homes. For a train. Don't do it.	Alignments- Ashland Displacements Res/Comm
14788 9/7 Web Comment Form / Ashland CAC Comment	After attending all Ashland and Hanover meetings including the CAC committee I recommend the trench option through Ashland and vehemently oppose any western bypass. The Ashland residents comprise a historic Train Town. I dont see how and why in good conscious DRPT CBT or FRA can support displacing 50+ families (many historic homes)churches cemeteries historic Civil and Revolutionary War sites businesses and century farms along the bypass lines on your maps. We're already experiencing the impact of decreased property value as well as the negative health and emotional stress of this project. I implore you to select the least impacted route and use the existing rail infrastructure to reach your goal. What started as a high speed rail campaign for Amtrak to attract DC to RVA commuters is clearly now a quest for increased freight capacity. Why are tax payers paying the price both in taxes homes property and lifestyle for a private for-profit CSX? This is not fair ethical and not what this community wants or needs!	Alignments- Ashland Cultural Resources Real Estate



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14789 9/7 Web Comment Form	The trench option seems to be the way to go .I and many members of my family have grown up here and have lived here in the Western Bypass area. Our roots are here. So many of the come here's " don't have a clue about this area . We do from many generations that have lived here. The trench is the way to go . Please don't Go with the Western Bypass....so much history so many families so many memories !"	Alignments- Ashland
14790 9/7 Web Comment Form	Once again tonight I attended a meeting on proposals for the path of rails through the Ashland area. Tonight my church Independence Christian Church on Independence Road was full of residents who will have their home taken or impacted by the path of dc2rvaproposals for tracks. I knew most of them was kin to many worship with many and knowhow much they and generations before them have loved this area and held onto this land. There are so many reasons why the Western Bypass is not the right choice for the rails. One is the number of families that will be impacted two the cost of the infrastructure that would need to be built three the impact to the environment four the elevation of the land calls forover passes that will be elevated over multiple roadways five the impact on agricultural are as six the impact on places of worships even the fact that your assessment of cost is vastly understated as you are using old maps that do not show some of the homes that have been built since 2013 and eight you have stated you would use the best possible infrastructure utilizing existing right of ways which the Western Bypass is not. We in the Western Bypass are very opposed to rails in our area. While I do not want to see anyone have to be impacted by this project it is easy to see that the trench option presented in Ashland Town on Center Street is the best option. It uses existing right of ways and does not destroy anyone's home or farm. The path of rails in the Western Bypass will totally destroy this area. This area has a long and rich history which could be told by many voices that both rest in the Independence Church Cementary and by their descendents who still live worship farm and enjoy the area. I pray that you carefully consider how you proceed with this project though I might not live to see it I know my children or grandchildren will and I hope that they too can be enjoying life along Independence Road just as those who came before them	Alignments- Ashland Cost Cultural Resources



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14791 9/7 Web Comment Form	A western bypass around the Town of Ashland is the only viable option. There is not enough room through the middle of Town for three tracks above or below ground. Any option through Town would destroy this historic Town economically and socially. A western bypass would give the dc2rva project 4 tracks instead of 3. As the Town and the county originally stated the western bypass is the best option.	Alignments- Ashland Economics
14792 9/7 Web Comment Form	This idea of putting tracks in any area of Hanover County that they currently do not exists saddens me. I am an employee of Hanover Habitat for Humanity and my goal is to make sure that people in my community have safe affordable & stable housing. It's a terrible thing to take a home away from a family... money won't replace that stability. I couldn't fathom someone taking my home or buying my home..... it's home... it's memories of time spent with family. My neighborhood (Oakhill Estates) was originally projected to be greatly effected this broke my heart... as seven years ago... my children and I were homeless...: now we own a home....that could never be replaced.....I think options that are along routes that CSX already uses/owns/maintains should be considered only. I do not support in any way taking a home away from even one family	Alignments- Ashland Displacements Res/Comm
14794 9/7 Web Comment Form	I have a home that would be uninhabitable if the western bypass is chosen. I am begging you all to choose the trench option through Ashland. As I understand there would be disruption for construction of the trench it would not destroy our homes our families our farms and our wildlife habitats. I oppose all western bypass options and support the trench through Ashland.	Alignments- Ashland Construction Farmland
147800 8/31 Email	I am looking at the Ashland Western Bypass - AWB 4 map and would like to know when the information about shifting Blunts Bridge Road was added to the map (page 12 of the AWB 4 map). I noticed that the last update date on the AWB 4 map is 08.20.2017. Is there a way to identify what changes were made and the dates changes were made since this map was first released? It is not fair to be pushing the CBC to be choosing options while you are still making updates. Also cost	Alignments- Ashland



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	<p>estimates to the Western Bypass options should be updated as changes are made. I am wondering/concerned that the same level of detail has not been placed into the other Western Bypass options. Why is that? Three of the four Western Bypass options affect the area I am asking about. Shouldn't ALL maps and cost estimates be revised when updates are made to an area that is in all options? I have attached a screenshot of the Blunts Bridge change I am referring to. Thanks Phyllis Laidlow</p> <p>*Note: provided contact information based on earlier information request to Randy for response</p>	
<p>147804 9/7 Email</p>	<p>HI -- What's the url link for the Ashland trench option presentation seen 6 Sep at Randolph Macon?</p>	<p>Alignments- Ashland Information Request</p>